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or animal. They can therefore have little appreciable dietetic importance.

(*b*) *Domestic animals.* We have seen from this account that ritual avoidances of food do not seriously affect the diet of large sections of the Bemba community. On the other hand it is not true to say that all available sources of food in the environment are exploited. The Bemba are not a pastoral people and could not keep cattle in large numbers because of the tsetse-fly. On the other hand sheep and goats are quite widely distributed in certain areas, and most households keep chickens and some pigeons. All these domestic animals are called *ifitekwa* or 'things kept', but in no case are *ifitekwa* kept primarily for meat or bred for that purpose. Goats or sheep may be given as a present to a chief or a European; dedicated to an ancestral spirit after successful recovery from illness; or given as compensation to an injured person for the loss of a limb or an eye. They may be killed and used as meat, but always on some such ceremonial occasion, never in case of pure hunger. Chickens are more numerous and less valuable, but even then a chicken is never killed 'just for food', even in the hunger season. Fowls are the ordinary present of honour for a chief or visitor of high status, and provide the ceremonial meal at a marriage or initiation ceremony. While there is no particularly sacred attitude towards chicken, a man will say, 'If I kill a chicken just to eat, I shall soon have none left.' That is to say he does not breed poultry scientifically, put down sittings of eggs, or calculate the number of chickens he may expect to get; nor does he make any attempt to feed them. Hens run about the village and lay their eggs wherever they please, and some of these sittings are finally hatched. But each new brood is regarded, with some justification, as a separate piece of good fortune for which the owner is not responsible, and which he is never certain will be repeated.[1] It is for this reason that he considers chickens should not be wasted or 'just eaten' and he will not part with eggs unless he can get money from a European for them. Teaching of scientific rearing of poultry would overcome the reluctance to use eggs. There is no fundamental magic belief at stake.

The Bemba attitude to pigeons is characteristic. These birds

[1] A number of magic rites are associated with the care of poultry such as the disposal of the eggshells at the crossroads, &c., and these may be taken as an indication of the measure of uncertainty the native feels on the question.

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are kept by one or two men in most villages and housed in elaborate pigeon houses built with considerable trouble and protected with magic rites. But they are hardly ever eaten because 'People want to keep many pigeons, so they are afraid to waste the seed' (i.e. to reduce the stock). They like to see the birds flying about the village. They are things kept as a sign of rank. They just flutter and flutter about. They show the rank of the owner of the pigeon house.'[1] A common saying is 'The domestic animals of rich people cause admiration like pigeons'[2] i.e. they wander here and there and give the effect of countless numbers.

Goats and sheep also add to the reputation of their owner. The reluctance of the Bemba to kill and use them for ordinary purposes seems to be based on two different attitudes. On the one hand these people are as ignorant of methods of rearing stock as they are of poultry breeding. They lack completely any pastoral tradition, and the way in which goats, for instance, are treated, makes it little short of miraculous that any survive. The Bemba children do not herd them or look after them, and it is not uncommon for the owner to forget to let his goats out of their pen to feed. A man buys a goat or sheep as a sort of gesture, probably because he wants to acquire possessions, and he puts it in a shed, but he never seems to have any idea of building up a herd or relying economically on the sale of meat. The milk is never used. Added to this the killing of so large an animal as a goat or a sheep has a particular significance for the native, and this makes him unwilling to slaughter except for some special ceremonial reason. A goat is something approaching a human being, and is used nowadays as a substitute for human sacrifices. It can also serve as a compensation for some serious bodily injury, in which case it will probably change hands but not be killed. It is interesting that the Bemba, who have substituted money payments for many of their old religious dues, feel that a financial compensation would be unsuitable in such a case. 'It is right to give a goat because it is a man who has been hurt.' There is even some indication that the Bemba believe that to kill a domestic animal might bring dangerous consequences, just as the murder of a man would. In this tribe the belief that the spirit of a murdered man returns as a haunting

[1] *Fitekwa fya bukankala. Fyakupukapuka: filelanga bukankala bwa kwa cibinda ca nkunda.*

[2] *Fitekwa fya bakankala fyakukumukapo fye nge nkunde.*

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ghost is very strong. In the case of a dangerous animal like a leopard or a lion special ceremonies are performed to prevent the return of its spirit. In the old days the killing of an ox, I was told, was accompanied by the words, 'Kampinda (a name for the High God) who gave us this beast, now go out of it. Go and settle in that one', pointing to another animal. I never heard this said, but to this day the Nkolemambwe, the hereditary official responsible for killing most of the beasts slaughtered at the Paramount chief's court in connexion with various rites, describes himself as being 'fierce' (*umukali*) on this account, and as doing specially dangerous work for the community requiring subsequent purification. I have heard a native say that it is bad to kill a dog because its spirit could return. 'White men are cruel the way they shoot sick dogs. It is better to tie them up in the bush and walk quickly away and let them die.' Children are sometimes afraid to kill a chicken. One said, 'It is a frightening thing to watch the breath flutter away'.[1] This attitude towards the killing of domestic animals is interesting in an agricultural people in which the ritual attitude towards cattle has not been formalized in different institutions and religious ceremonies as it has among the pastoral Bantu. It amounts to a reluctance to treat goats and sheep merely as stock to be bred and killed, combined in this case with a lack of scientific knowledge of how to do so.

Conclusion.

To summarize the Bemba views on food it must be admitted that they grade their different victuals according to fairly crude criteria, such as their lasting power, and ease of swallowing. Also habits developed in early infancy have made them used to experiencing particular sensations after eating, such as the feeling of fullness after a meal of *ubwali*. Hence other types of dishes have ceased to seem to them to be 'satisfying'. On the other hand, most of their prejudices appear to be extraordinarily sound in the particular environment in which they live. Their preference for millet flour as against cassava meal is an extremely sensible one as the chart of comparative values of finger millet, cassava, and maize given

[1] *Pakuloleshyo muntu apo umuceo uleputuka cakutina.* This fear seems to be combined with a definite desire to watch pain inflicted. Most natives consider it the treat of treats to see a sacrificial animal killed, and I have always noticed that children swarm to watch a goat killed and rather enjoy a long-drawn-out death.

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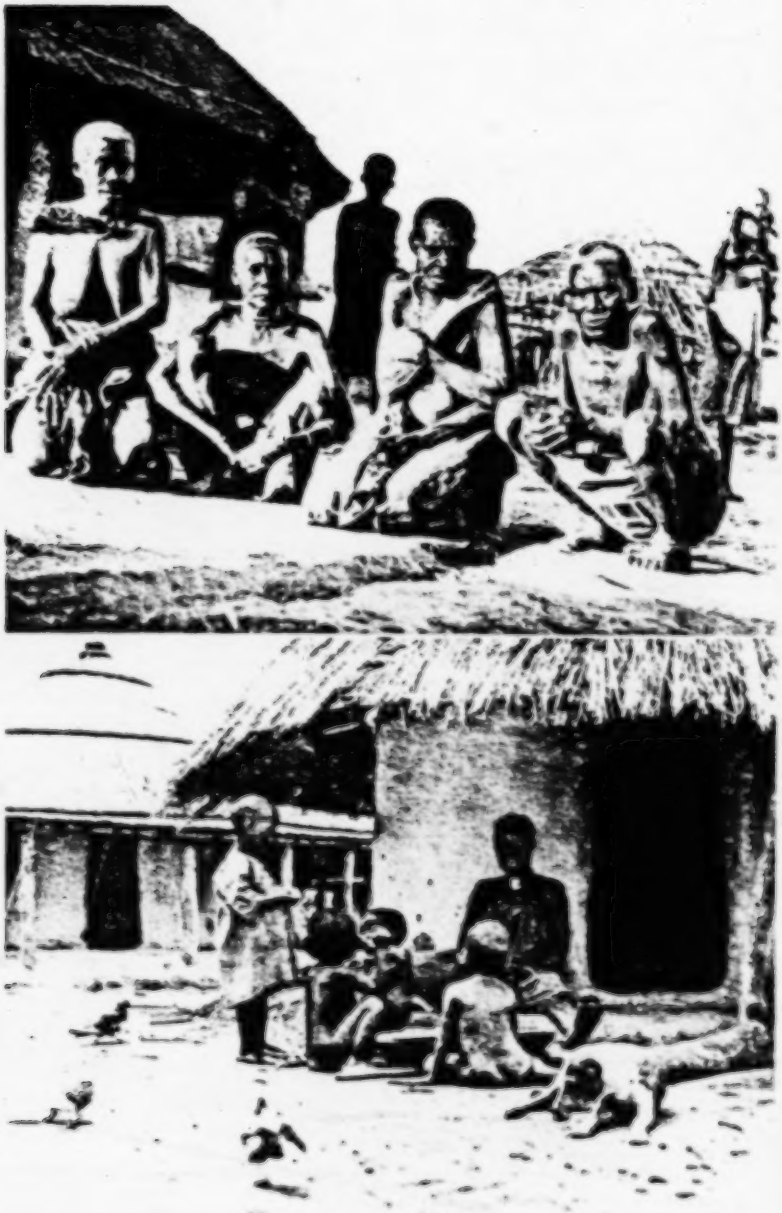

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Heads of cooking-teams. Four grandmothers ruling over 'big houses'. Women and children eat together.

[facing p. 192]

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[415] One axe, one spear, one hoe, a bed-mat, four or five cooking
422
556 pots, and the same number of baskets and a couple of blankets
would be the usual equipment. Few men own more than one
[291] cloth, or an outfit of European clothes such as shorts and a shirt,
or the tattered remnants of these. Women rarely have more than
one frock or cloth. Besides these, the people treasure certain
hereditary objects of no economic value such as the bow of the
man, the bead girdle (*umushingo*) of the woman, and certain beads,
[231] ivory bracelets, or anklets. A few Bemba own goats and sheep, and
many keep chickens and pigeons. All these possessions are indi-
428 vidually owned and bequeathed to descendants according to rule,
i.e. the heirlooms described above descend to the legal heirs, the
maternal nephews or grandsons. Any personal property made by
a man, or acquired by his efforts, may go to his own sons, his wife,
or his sister, as the case may be. His clothes or money, or his hut,
for the year or two it remains habitable, go to his wife or his
children, and the working pots and baskets to the wife or the sister.

556 If the material possessions of the Bemba are few in number,
422 they are also impermanent. Few objects can be reckoned as lasting
more than four or five years. It is impossible to protect the wood
of houses and furniture from the ravages of white ants, and the
same applies to baskets, mats, and most of the other contents of
an ordinary hut. Even sacred relics guarded with the utmost care
seem to have been frequently destroyed in the past by insects or fire,
and most of the surviving heirlooms are those of iron or copper,
ivory, or a few beads. This in itself affects the people's attitude
to property, and the social values associated with its accumulation.

436 To turn to present-day conditions, it must be realized that a
465 money income is not yet a universal measure of wealth in this
community. The amount of money the individual Bemba handles
each year is very small. I put it at 15*s.* to £1 on an average (cf.
Chap. X). Money can only be obtained by work for Europeans
or occasionally for fellow Africans. The average unskilled wage
was 7*s.* 6*d.* a month during my stay, and the opportunities for
regular employment in the country were very few.[1] Practically
only the domestic servants and clerks could be considered as
regular wage earners, and these were naturally a very small pro-
portion of the community. A certain amount of money is said to

[1] Cf. the figures for absentee labour given in Chapter I. It was reckoned in 1934 that in the Kasama area only 30 per cent. could have earned their tax of 10*s.* locally.

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(*d*) *Spears, bows, dogs, and guns.* The Bemba occasionally hunt in twos and threes with spears and dogs. Trained dogs are very valuable—about 10*s*.—and hard to buy. I never saw hunters go out with dogs, but I know that they are extremely skilful in throwing spears at a distance of about twenty feet, and that they sometimes kill small duiker in this manner. Bows and arrows are carried by very old men only and used to shoot at monkeys raiding gardens. A bow is handed down ceremoniously to a dead man's heir but is not often used in the hunt. It is the ambition of every native to own a muzzle-loading gun, which he can purchase for about 30*s*. and obtain a Government licence to use. Many Bemba still go to the mines for no other purpose than to earn the money for a gun, which seems to promise security and prestige in their old age. However, many of these guns are in fact more deadly to the hunter than to the quarry, since they are rammed with shot, slag iron, and rusty nails till the long-suffering barrels explode. It is unlikely that many buck are killed in this way.

European rifles are owned only by hunters employed by Europeans, or chiefs. The Bemba are said to be skilled trackers and think nothing of spending two or three days in pursuit of game. Game which is killed with a gun is the property of the shooter, to divide as he pleases, after he has given a portion to the nearest headman or chief. There is no special ritual attached to shooting, although the hunter may ask a blessing from the headman if he wishes, and in any case calls on his *imipashi* and carries magic charms.

(*e*) *Elephant hunters.* The Bemba elephant hunters were typical magician-specialists (*ifibinda*), i.e. they possessed both skill and the magic necessary to give them success. Elephants were killed formerly by the aid of weighted spears of specially heavy make by hunters known as *bashimunini*, with dogs and spears and large crowds of beaters by another type of hunter known as *bakalongwe*, or with guns traded from the Arabs by those called *Bafundi*. Nowadays elephant hunters only work for the Government or for certain big chiefs with special permission. The ordinary native is allowed to kill an elephant only when it is actually raiding his garden.

All elephant hunters were under the direct control of the chief in the old days, and he had the monopoly of the ivory so obtained. The chief summoned the hunters, but they were led by the *icibinda*.

A grey-brown, richly humic soil, permeable and retentive of moisture, alternates locally with loams and sandy loams. The underlying ironstone beds outcrop in the bushland towards the escarpment. Large ant-hills containing lime nodules are a characteristic feature in an area of otherwise non-calcareous soil.(1) Livingstone(2) mentions hot sources "at which maize and cassava can be boiled" south of Kalungwishi. They are more typical of the country farther north. Among the chipya vegetation (mixed deciduous woodland with tall grasses and bracken), now predominant, there still survive on sheltered sites patches of dense evergreen thicket (*mateshi*), remnants of the equatorial rain forest which must have prevailed in the earlier, more humid regime.

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE(3)

Cassava, the staple crop, is planted on rectangular or, more often, round mounds which remain in semi-permanent cultivation with periodic fallows. Potted grass turf is used as manure. Groundnuts and, in Shila villages, ground-beans, an important subsidiary crop, are usually grown on newer land. Balls of groundnuts stored in the trees are a characteristic feature in the villages. Sweet potatoes, maize, beans, pumpkins, Kaffir corn, are also cultivated in the main gardens. Cowpeas, edible gourds, and castor oil are grown as catch crops. Finger millet is grown for beer. Occasionally accompanied by bulrush millet and cattle melons, it occupies the thicket (north of Mbereshi) and, more usually, the small *citemene* gardens, measuring up to one-third of an acre each, on the clearings in the foothill woodland. These gardens, encountered more frequently among the Chishinga-Lunda than among the Shila, are abandoned after a few years' exploitation. Small *mutemba* gardens under early maturing varieties of maize, (consumed green), rice, bananas and sugar cane are made on the moist and very fertile acacia dambos east of Lake Mweru. These are more characteristic of the Bemba country. Rice plots, particularly exposed to the depredations of birds, are protected by bark rope birdscarers, and shelters are erected for the watchers to keep off the hippo. Pineapples, mangoes and pawpaws are successfully grown in the area as is oil-palm, which is common on Kilwa island. Tobacco, Asiatic and white yams, Lima beans, chillies, sesame, and cotton, are among the minor crops grown in the village gardens alongside the huts. Carcas oil is planted for fences in some Chishinga-Lunda villages. Irrigated wheat is found on mission farms and an attempt has been made to introduce coffee as a cash crop.

LIVESTOCK

Prevalence of tsetse fly, as well as the lack of pastoral traditions, were responsible for the virtual absence of cattle. Lukwesa (1760-1805) kept a few head of black cattle as a matter of prestige.(4) They were neither milked nor killed for meat and could graze where they pleased on the cultivated land of his subjects.(5) Lately the keeping of cattle has been

(1) Livingstone, I, p.267.
(2) ibid., p.270.
(3) Based on C. G. Trapnell.
(4) Curtin, op.cit., p.129.
(5) Gamitto, I, p.290.

Luapula Peoples

231 encouraged and there are now a few herds in the valley. Horses and mules are lacking. The donkey ridden by Gamitto when he made his entry in 1830 was the first of the species to be seen in the country.(1) The villagers keep poultry and some small stock, mainly goats and sheep.

FISHING

226 Fish abound in the Luapula, the riverside lagoons and Lakes Mweru and Mofwe. Livingstone collected the vernacular names of thirty-nine species caught in Lake Mweru.(2) Some fishing goes on all the year round but the season, when the men move to the fishing camps on the river islands, extends from September to January. In the shallow marshland pools the fish are speared while laying their eggs. In flowing water they are trapped in conical wickerwork baskets set in rocky falls or in the openings in a weir.(3) On Lake Mweru they are caught from canoes with hook and line. On the Luapula the people go out in their dugouts at night and drive the fish into seine-nets (*ubukonde*) by hitting the surface of the water with wooden discs attached to poles.(4) Large-scale fishing is done with
[177] drag-nets (*umukwau*) which require several men to pull them. Formerly nets were made by men from barkcloth cord. Nowadays nylon and cotton nets are
[278] used. Vegetable poisons and stupefacients, now banned, were employed in the past.

HUNTING

223 Hunting and fowling are spare-time activities. Elephants and buffa-
224 loes, which in Livingstone's time used to be chased into the Mofwe mudflats during the rainy season and killed in great numbers,(5) are no longer found in Kazembe's country though some still remain on the Belgian Congo side.
[411] Large herds of lechwe antelope roam the swamp country beyond the inhabited belt. Fire-arms have displaced the traditional weapons.

DIET

251 The basic foodstuffs are cassava(6) and fish. Game, poultry, fruit and wild bees' honey, supplement the diet. Cassava is soaked in water,
252 peeled and sun-dried for storing. The root, after being pounded and ground
262 on a stone, is made into porridge and flavoured with groundnuts or other
273 relish. Sweet cassava is eaten roasted.(7) Fish is consumed fresh or dried, game fresh or smoked. Fish, when dried in the sun or over a fire, will keep for three months. Water-lily roots, on which, according to tradition, the aboriginal pygmies fed, are considered a delicacy. Native-made alcoholic beverages were millet beer(8) (still made), *Borassus* palm wine, mead(9) and a spirit distilled from maize.(10) Oil is expressed from palm
276 fruit(11) and from groundnuts and vinegar used to be made from bananas.(12) Tobacco is taken as snuff and smoked in pipes.(13) *Bhang* (hemp), was

(1) Burton, op.cit., p.252.
(2) Livingstone, op.cit., p.243.
(3) Brelsford, 2, 1947, pp.70, 71.
(4) Holmes, 1925, p.36.
(5) Livingstone, op.cit., pp.248, 278, 299.
(6) Burton, op.cit., p.40.
(7) ibid., p.181.
(8) ibid., p.43.
(9) Gamitto, II, p.26; Valdez, II, p.246.
(10) Boedich, p.91.
(11) Livingstone, op.cit., pp.243, 278.
(12) ibid, p.272.
(13) ibid., p.251; Gamitto, I, p.401.

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(c) Economic Background. The Bemba are an agri-
cultural people.

like most of the Central Bantu group to which they belong. They keep no cattle. Tsetse-fly at present prevents their keeping stock over most of the country, but in any case they seem to have no pastoral traditions, whatever they may have had formerly. Thus they have no means of storing wealth as have the Southern Bantu. Their marriage contracts are fulfilled by service and not by the passage of cattle. In the old days military glory and the extraction of tribute from conquered peoples seems to have been the dominant ambition of the Bemba chiefs, and their wealth consisted in the size of their following and the amount of service they were able to command. This fact profoundly influences their position at the present day (cf. p. 116).

The soil of most of this district is poor and it has not attracted white settlement. The staple crop is finger millet (*eleusine coracana*), while some kafir corn, a little maize, legumes, and pumpkins are also grown. The people practise shifting cultivation of a primitive type, and the plentiful supply of land and the lack of any localized natural resources which might attract the inhabitants to settle in one area rather than another all affect the political system. As has been shown, they decrease the strength of local ties as against political or kinship affiliations, and they account for the fact that the power to distribute land is not an important prerogative of leadership in distinction to conditions in most Southern Bantu tribes.

Hunting and fishing contribute a small share of the food-supply only. Organized marketing does not exist, and under modern conditions no cash crop has been found for this area. This fact, together with the absence of opportunities for local employment, forces the adult male population to look for work outside the tribal area, with resultant effects, as will be seen, on the political system of the tribe.

(*d*) *White Administration*. The type of white administration introduced in this area is described on pp. 112–20.

III. Bases of Authority

The positions of leadership in Bemba society consist of the following offices: (*a*) *territorial rulers* (chiefs and headmen); (*b*) *administrative officers and councillors*; (*c*) *priests, guardians of sacred shrines, and magic specialists with economic functions*; (*d*) *army leaders* in the old days. Succession to all these offices is